

## **Why are Nursing Home Staff Influenza Vaccination Rates Important?**

This survey collects information on vaccinations received by staff working in nursing homes that were obtained between September 1<sup>st</sup> and the following April 15<sup>th</sup> for each year shown. The rates show the percentage of staff vaccinated and the statewide average which is the percentage of staff vaccinated reported by all Maryland nursing homes for the year.

The Centers for Disease Control recommends that everyone 6 months or older get vaccinated against influenza as soon as the flu vaccine is available in their community. It is especially important that health care workers to get vaccinated because they may care for or live with people at high risk for influenza-related complications. People 65 years or older, young children, and people with medical conditions like asthma, diabetes, heart disease, or kidney disease are at especially high risk from the flu.

The influenza season generally begins as early as October and continues through the spring months of March and April. Annual vaccination is important because influenza is unpredictable; flu viruses are constantly changing and immunity from vaccination declines over time. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body and provide protection against the flu. Getting vaccinated early provides protection throughout the influenza season.

To compare nursing home rates click on “View Results for all Nursing Homes in this County”.